



Northampton Senior Services & Senior Center

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Benefits Counseling Application Assistance Program Volunteer Position

Volunteers are needed for the Benefits Counseling Application Assistance Program (BCAA). The program helps seniors navigate the maze of forms and information about public benefits for which they may be eligible to help them stay healthy, secure and independent. Volunteers will choose whether they will visit seniors and their caregivers at senior centers, at home or both; home visits are made to seniors lacking formal and informal transportation supports. They will work with the BCCA Program Manager to determine whether they will work with consumers in the town or area in which they live or whether they will work in another community, depending on what is most appropriate for each community.

Volunteers will also work with the Program Manager to set a schedule, with hours most likely on weekdays between 9 am - 2:30 pm. They will be supervised by the Program Manager in conjunction with the Assistant Director/Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers will receive monthly mileage for transportation. They will be provided with a free Northampton Senior Center membership scan card with eligibility to participate in senior center programming including those programs that are typically limited to residents of Northampton, Leeds and Florence. Volunteers are also recognized each year at a luncheon held in May.

Volunteers will:

1. Participate in mandatory training including:
 - a. Home visiting and basic assessment skills
 - b. The array of benefits and programs for which seniors are eligible and tips for applying and following up on applications
 - c. Making referrals
 - d. Ethics and confidentiality
 - e. Related technology
2. Perform some guided outreach in selected areas to find seniors and their caregivers who could benefit from the program
3. Provide information on the benefits that can help seniors save money
 - a. Explain the program and application process
 - b. Assist seniors in completing applications
 - c. Help to obtain forms and documentation
 - d. Arrange appointments for seniors for interviews or other parts of application processes
 - e. See applications through, together with staff, from application to award/recertification
4. Refer seniors to additional programs that might be of benefit or communicate to staff that referral is needed

Volunteers must:

1. Be detail oriented
2. Be patient
3. Be comfortable with basic computer skills
4. Be capable of performing math calculations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, percentages)
5. Have good listening skills
6. Be comfortable making calls/visits to new contacts and speaking publicly in the course of outreach
7. Pass a criminal background check